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October 28, 1999

FDA Commissioner Jane E. Henney
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Dear Commissioner Henney,

I should have written this letter long ago to express my disapproval of using antibiotics that we know have value in fighting infections in humans, for the purpose of improving growth or to cover up poor hygiene practices in animals. The bacteria that used to be so easily overwhelmed by such antibiotics as vancomycin are now resistant to it. One might argue that inconclusive tests have been made to confirm this link between bacterial resistance and animal feed additives, but the argument should be reversed. That is, if there is any chance under the sun the additives are causing unconquerable bacteria, please let's not allow their use routinely in livestock.

My husband and I are farmers, voters, and have professional jobs out in the work force, and we see the issue from all sides. The most important side is that of human health. Livestock can be raised quite nicely without using the antibiotics we use on humans. We are only encouraging an overall planetary problem by allowing such overuse of our weapons against bacteria.

Please prohibit livestock producers from routinely adding medically important antibiotics to animal feed to promote growth.

Thank you,

Valerie Dambacher

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